



AG ANNOUNCES CONVICTION OF CENTRE ATTORNEY FOR FIRST-DEGREE THEFT FROM STATE FAIR TRIAL FAX FUND

(MONTGOMERY) –Attorney General Luther Strange today announced the conviction of a Centre attorney for first-degree theft from the State Fair Trial Tax Fund. A jury in Cherokee County Circuit Court convicted Rodney Stallings late Tuesday following a two-day trial. Sentencing is set for January 5, 2015.

The Attorney General’s Office presented evidence that Stallings stole \$328,246 by intentionally filing 246 false fee declarations for indigent defense cases in which he was not entitled to receive payment. Stallings never appeared as counsel in some of the cases, and in others he made up case numbers as well as defendants. Stallings’ criminal acts occurred between 2006 and 2012. In 2012, he was suspended by the Alabama State Bar Association.

In finding Stallings guilty, the jury found the existence of two aggravating factors: that the theft involved the taking of property having great monetary value and that it occurred over an extended period of time with a high degree of sophistication involved. Stallings faces a potential sentence of two to 20 years for the class B felony.

Attorney General Strange said, “This crime involved a calculated and callous theft over many years, taking hundreds of thousands of scarce dollars from a fund that was intended to compensate attorneys who provide services to those in need.”

Attorney General Strange commended those involved in bringing this case to a successful conclusion, noting in particular Assistant Attorneys General James Rutter and Ternisha Miles and Paralegal Lori Arnold of his Criminal Trials Division and Special Agents of his Investigations Division. He also thanked Ellen Eggers of the Alabama Department of Finance’s indigent defense service and Cherokee County Circuit Clerk Dwayne Amos.

--30--

